

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Moody Girl, Inc.

#### Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Entrepreneur Develops Salsa Business

##### Client Profile:

Moody Girl, Inc., a microenterprise based in Schuyler, Nebraska, is a food manufacturing business engaged in producing and marketing authentic salsa. Owned and operated by Becki Zanardi, the company currently markets grocery and specialty stores throughout Nebraska and nationwide through their Internet site. Moody Girl, Inc., employs 10 people.

##### Situation:

An abundant backyard garden combined with her husband's propensity for Mexican food led Becki Zanardi to experiment with canning salsa. Ten years of trial and error resulted in several varieties of hot and medium salsa. Becki started out by giving the salsa to friends and family and, soon, was unable to keep up with the demand. This prompted the entrepreneur to consider creating a company so she could widely market the product. Becki contacted the University of Nebraska Food Processing Center, a partner of the Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Nebraska MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

##### Solution:

Becki participated in Nebraska MEP's Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program (FEAP) and received assistance with all aspects of developing her business, including product development, business development, packaging and labeling, and marketing tool development. The Nebraska Food Processing Center staff provided assistance in "scaling up" her salsa recipe for commercial production, sourcing ingredients, selecting packaging, creating a label in compliance with federal regulation, creating marketing materials, and consulting on a myriad of small business issues. After evaluating manufacturing options and determining the most cost effective approach, Becki decided to use a custom manufacturer to produce and package her product. The Food Processing Center identified various co-packers with the necessary capabilities and worked with Becki to get the product into production. Today, this salsa is available in over 25 grocery and specialty stores throughout Nebraska and on the Internet. In early 2007, Becki approached The Food Processing Center again for assistance in developing the second product for her company, a spaghetti sauce.

##### Results:

- \* Grossed \$10,000 in sales.
- \* Created new product.
- \* Anticipated creation of new jobs.

##### Testimonial:

"The Nebraska Food Entrepreneur Assistance Program guided us from the very beginning, clearly giving us the options we needed, and made what could have been a daunting process into something

## MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

### Success Stories from the Field

very attainable. We had access to the assistance from the Nebraska MEP we needed every step of the way, and we are thrilled with the results.”

Becki Zanardi, Owner